

LIFE OF RŪPA BHAWANĪ

(A Great Hermitess of Kashmīr).

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DISTANCE of place has undoubtedly a great charm, but distance of time has greater, and when it is associated with the memory of a pious soul, this charm is immeasurably enhanced. A saintly soul's account of life will certainly be appreciated by many in whom tradition is not dead, by many to whom ancient learning and the veneration of ancestors are the breath of life, and by many in whom the gems of literature temper materialism and graft a fine philanthropy upon philosophy.

From the earliest times, Kashmīr was a land of saints and seers of sublime order, who developed in themselves occult powers which beggar description. Despite the lapse of centuries since they lived, they still command public homage and devotion. To their serene, meditative minds speculation in the sphere of metaphysics was always congenial. Anecdotes of their occult powers ever dominated the minds of both men and women throughout the country, shedding a perpetual glamour over the popular sentiments and tending to perpetually renovate mankind.

Amongst them was the famous holy woman named Rūpa Bhawānī, *alias* Alakeshwari ('the lady with the lock of hair') so called because she used to leave the hair of her head unplaited or Alak-Ishvari (incarnation of the Invisible). She was born in S. 1681 (1625 A.D.) Her name has an assured place among holy seers, shedding rays of purity all round. Her father's name was Paṇḍit Mādho Dhar, and her mother's Sampat Māji. The latter came from the Kaul family of Kāwdāra Mahall. Paṇḍit Mādho Dhar lived on the right bank of the Jhelum river below the 6th Bridge at Śrīnagar, close to Paṇḍit Shyām Sundar Lāl Dhar's house, where at present Paṇḍit Bala Kaul's descendants live, and where there exists still a well sacred to her memory. In him the qualities of virtue and high-mindedness were blended. He used to have philosophical discussions with Sayyid Kamāl, *alias* Thag Bābā, a Muhammadan recluse of high order, who lived near his house across the river.

Paṇḍit Mādho Dhar used to go to the Hari Parvat daily for worship. One day he saw the goddess Shārikā in a dream, and she asked him what he desired. He told her that he desired nothing but this, that she should deign to take birth in his house as his daughter. The goddess granted his prayer. In course of time, his wife gave birth to a bright little daughter. The baby was named Rūpa Bhawānī. As she grew up, her divine origin manifested itself more and more. The purity and sanctity of her life were conspicuous. Her speech was rapture all and nameless bliss. Some of her sayings have passed into the intellectual currency of the Kāshmiris. She was the beau-ideal of all that is pure, gentle and spiritualistic. She was a paragon of virtue and wisdom—the glory of her sex.

One day Rūpa Bhawānī, when she was only 2½ years old, was carried by a female servant to give a present to Rishi Pīr¹ (a renowned ascetic of Kashmīr) on his birthday. She gave him the present, but did not approve of his performing miracles, which made him famous, as great saints, she said, shunned show and publicity and remained in secrecy in absolute communion with God. She, therefore, regretfully remarked: *Rishis piyeyih tembrā, parantu ohnojan gayes*, meaning that a spark (of revelation) had fallen on Rishi Pīr, but it had gone the wrong way down his throat. Rishi Pīr, on seeing her and hearing her remark, bowed down before her.

While yet but seven years old, she was married to a young man named Paṇḍit Shyām Sundar, son of Chatur Paṇḍit of the Sapru family living at Sapatyār (2nd Bridge) at Śrīnagar.

Rūpa Bhawānī's mother-in-law was, like that of Lāl Dēd² the prophetess, noted for relentless cruelty and was a stumbling block to her happiness. Rūpa Bhawānī used to go,

¹ See the *Indian Antiquary*, vol. LX, pp. 95-98, 123-127.

² See the *Indian Antiquary*, vol. L (1921), pp. 302-308, 309-312, vol. LIX (1930), pp. 108-113, 127-130, vol. LX (1931), pp. 191-193, and vol. LXI (1932), pp. 13-16.

in the first grey of the morning to Hari Parvat for worship, and even for this absurd and scandalous whispers, born of sheer malice and hatred, were circulated by her cranky mother-in-law. Once her husband was, at his mother's instructions, sent after her as a spy to see where she was actually going so early in the morning. He followed her and watched her from a distance. When she was returning, near the place called Parankanih, to the south of the Hari Parvat hill, she looked behind and saw her husband following her like a spy. She was naturally offended at this, and a prayer fell from her lips that the Sapru family might never thrive. And this family has actually not thriven since, there being very few people belonging to it in the whole Valley of Kashmir.

Once on the Khitsimâvas³ day Rûpa Bhawânî's parents sent a pot full of *pilâv* (cooked rice and meat with spices) to her husband's house. Her mother-in-law, far from being pleased, began to grumble that the *pilâv* was insufficient to feed all the family members and relations. Rûpa Bhawânî, however, covered the pot with a cloth and meekly requested her to begin distributing its contents. She began giving platefuls out of it, but lo ! it would not empty. When all were served, Rûpa Bhawânî lifted the cloth and it was then empty. Yet her mother-in-law's anger was not appeased. She told Rûpa Bhawânî peevishly to remove the empty pot from her sight. She took it to the *ghât* and let it float down the river. It reached the *ghât* of her parents while her father happened to be bathing there. He recognised the pot as his own and, catching it, took it home.

Rûpa Bhawânî led her hermitical life at Wastarwan for 12½ years, then at Chashma-i-Sâhibî for another period of 12½ years and then in a forest in the Lâr *pargana* for another 12 years. The *lambardâr* of the village of Maingâm, named Lâl Chand, was informed by some boys that they had seen an ascetic at a cranny in the neighbouring forest. He went with them and saw her, and at his request she came and lived in his house for six months. She then left this house and stayed on the bank of the Sindh River at the same village for another period of 12½ years. Here she planted a *chinâr* tree, which is still there. At all the above places she performed austere penances. While at Maingâm, she used occasionally to float down the Sindh river on a piece of matting to Qasba Lâr village, where Shâh Sâdiq Qalandar (a great Muhammadan philomath) used to reside, and there she used to converse on religious topics with him. Once he said to her : " Rupa Dedi ! If you come to our side (i.e., become a convert to Islâm) you will become gold in place of Rûp (' silver '). " To this she replied : " Shâh Sâdiq ! If you come to our side (become a Hindu at heart) you will become Mokta (' pearl,' or ' having attained salvation ') in place of [shi] Shâh (' glass '). " At another time, when Shâh Sâdiq Qalandar saw her, she was dressed in a garment dyed crimson. He asked her what colour her garment was. She replied : " *Zâg, surath, tah mazeth.* " These words have a two-fold meaning, the one literal and the other mystical, namely (1) ' vitriol, safflower and madder ' (*Rubia cordifolia*, Linn.) and (2) ' be awake, catch Him (God) and do not extend ' (in this world).

Rûpa Bhawânî removed from Maingâm to Ripur⁴ just above the hermitage of Shâh Sâdiq Qalandar, where she performed austere penances for another period of 12½ years. After that she left one of her female servants, named Jaman Dêd (whose own house was at Qasba Lâr), in charge of this place and went to Vâsakur village, near Sumbal. Kastûrmâji was another female servant of hers, who belonged to the same family as Aita Shâh Malang,⁵ one of the esoteric disciples of Rishi Pîr. She was a widow and had only a young son, named Râma Chandra Matu, with her. Rûpa Bhawânî took her together with her son to Vâsakur. At this place she remained for 25 years. Here she had a well sunk by a blind potter, whose

³ This Festival falls on the *Amâvasya* of the month of Puṣya. In every Brâhman's house *khichrî* is cooked on the evening of this day, and a plateful kept outside in the compound for the god Kuvera.

⁴ Noted for vineyards which produce the best grapes in Kashmir.

⁵ See *Indian Antiquary*, vol. LX, pp. 95-98, 123-127.

eyesight became miraculously restored as soon as water level was reached in the well. This potter's descendants still live at Vāsakur.

Rūpa Bhawānī had a brother named Lāl Dhar, whose son, Bāla Dhar, lived with Rūpa Bhawānī at Vāsakur. This youth remained illiterate till he was 22 years of age. One day his father rebuked him for his illiteracy. Stung with remorse he wept bitterly. Rūpa Bhawānī, however, consoled him and gave him a pen made from a pomegranate twig, ink made with charcoal and some paper, and bade him write an application for employment to Aurangzeb, the then emperor at Delhi. He obeyed and, wonderful to relate, wrote it admirably and in the best Persian diction. The Emperor, who was pleased with its style and handwriting, appointed him to a post at Delhi, which he took up, and held with great credit. After some time he sent a letter composed in verse to his sister, Rūpa Bhawānī. She also sent him a reply in verse. Both these letters are reproduced below.

عرضِ حال بال دهر که از مقام دہلی بخدمت شری ست گور صاحبہ عرضداشتہ است

- (۱) عرضِ حال سرگذشتم بشنوید : لاعلاجم چاره ساز من شوید
- (۲) بودم از فقلت در ایام شیباب : روز و شب مشغول فکر حور و خواب
- (۳) ہم زپای کار عاقل ہم ز سر : بودم از اصلی خبر پُر بے خبر
- (۴) لیک فیضِ عام نوشد خاص من : یافتم بارِ جفا بت در زمن
- (۵) صدقے بودم ز الطافِ کمال : بهره مند از دولتِ قرب وصال
- (۶) قدر آن دولت بے شناختم : خود بہ دارِ راستی کج باختم
- (۷) وای بومن جرمِ غفلت کرده ام : سر بسر نقصیدر خدمت کرده ام
- (۸) چون چنین جرمی زمن گشده ظہور : بوگذار افتادم از دریای نور
- (۹) باز روی از کاهلی بر تافتم : بر درِ رحمت سراغ یافتم
- (۱۰) رفت دریایِ دلم خارِ طلب : دمیدم شد گرم بازارِ طلب
- (۱۱) صد بیابان دور ماندم زاجداد : خانقہ ہجران شود یارب خراب
- (۱۲) پی نہ بردم سوی این رہ چند گاہ : دور ماندم زان درِ عالم بفاہ
- (۱۳) تا کہ روزی خضر و قدم شد دو چار : کو بر راہ ظلمدم شد دستیار
- (۱۴) چونکہ بیمودم ز رہ چندے قدم : ناگہان گشتم سگے سنگ رہم
- (۱۵) سگ بہ یک لقمہ وفاداری کند : این سگ از خوردن جفاکاری کند
- (۱۶) این سگ درندہ یاران الکذرا : الکذراے زیرکان کودم خبر
- (۱۷) آن نہ سگ ہم سنگ گرگ و شیر بود : وحشش از عالمے جان می ربود
- (۱۸) چون سگ بدخوی دام نگیر شد : پس بہ پایِ رفتنم زنجیر شد
- (۱۹) از کشاکشهای آن سگ دمیدم : صد دلایا کرده رفتم یک قدم
- (۲۰) قلعت دیدم چو رفتم چند گام : بود در رفعت بے عالی مقام
- (۲۱) جانب خود ناگہان دیدم دوان : از نگہبانان آن دہ پهلوان
- (۲۲) ہو یکی دیدم عیار و رہزن : در رہ یزدان شدہ آہرمنے
- (۲۳) خواستم راہ درون رفتن رہ : تا بہ خلوت گاہ او پئے نمودمے

- (۲۴) ریکی راهی به چاه می نمود .: در عیاری دستگاری می نمود
 (۲۵) ریکی در گمرویی غولم شده .: سدرای راه مقبولم شده
 (۲۶) بسکه با آنهان ندیدم کس حریف .: از غریبی یافتم خود را نحیف
 (۲۷) جذبۀ توفیق شد چون دستیار .: یافتم پس بر در آن قلعه دار
 (۲۸) کوچه دیدم بسے تاریک و تنگ .: باد نواند زدن دردی شلنگ
 (۲۹) ناگهانم جذبۀ آن خضر راه .: از کشا کشهای آنهان شد پناه
 (۳۰) راه کوچه در حریم خاص بود .: رهنوش جذبۀ اخلاص بود
 (۳۱) میشدی هرگه سعادت رهبر .: بر سر آن کوچه میگردم گذر
 (۳۲) بر سر آن کوچه چون باد صبا .: گاه گاهی یافتم نوبے وفا
 (۳۳) لیک ره در خلوت خاصم کجاست .: گر نهای راه آن خلوت بهجاست
 (۳۴) زانکه از دل بندۀ آندر گم .: جذبۀ فرمای اے خضر ره
 (۳۵) بر سر آن کوچه بسقم خاکسار .: زانکه بدینم نقش پای آن نگار
 (۳۶) دیده ام من بسے رندان هند .: لیک کمتر از مریدان تواند
 (۳۷) داشتم حد ادب چون در نظر .: عرض حال خود نمودم مختصر

Translation of letter from Bāla Dhar to Rūpa Bhawānī.

- (1) Please listen to what occurred to me.
I am helpless. Be my helper.
- (2) I was, through negligence, in my youth
Busy day and night with eating and sleeping.
- (3) I neglected work entirely ;
I was wholly ignorant of real knowledge.
- (4) But thy general munificence became special [munificence] to me.
I obtained audience of thee in this world.
- (5) Long did I, through [your] extreme kindness,
Avail of the fortune of close contact [with you].
- (6) I did not esteem that fortune much ;
I myself played foul in the game of truth.
- (7) Alas ! I have committed the offence of negligence ;
I have been entirely remiss in service.
- (8) When such an offence was committed by me,
I was tossed up on the bank from the river of light.
- (9) Then I turned away owing to [my] idleness ;
I found a clue at the door of thy mercy.
- (10) A thorn of quest pricked into the bottom of my heart,
And a keen inclination arose for the quest.
- (11) I remained a hundred deserts distant from you.
O God, may the house of distance be ruined !
- (12) I could not get a clue to the way for sometime.
I remained at a distance from that door—the asylum of the world—
- (13) Until one day the prophet *Khizr* of the time met me.
He stretched out to me his helping hand in the way of darkness.
- (14) When I walked some paces on the way,
A dog suddenly hindered me from proceeding.

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- (15) A dog becomes faithful by [giving him] a mouthful of food ;
This dog commits oppression on being fed (lit., ' from eating ').
- (16) O friends, beware of this biting dog !
O intelligent people, beware ! I have given you a warning.
- (17) Not a dog that, it was equal to a wolf or a tiger ;
Fear of it used to take life from a world.
- (18) When this dog of bad habits seized me by the skirt.
It hampered me from moving on (lit., ' became a chain on the foot of my going ').
- (19) From constant struggles with that dog
I walked one pace after [giving him] a hundred pats.
- (20) When I walked a few paces, I spied a fort.
It was a very lofty building in elevation.
- (21) I suddenly found running towards me
Ten warriors (i.e., 5 internal and 5 external senses) from [among] its guards.
- (22) I found every one of them crafty and a robber,
[Who had] become an evil spirit infesting the road towards God.
- (23) I, however, inquired the way to enter,
So that I could spy the secret abode.
- (24) Each one of them pointed to me a way to a well—
Showing his power in craftiness.
- (25) Each one led me astray,
Becoming an obstacle on the road agreeable to me.
- (26) I could not find anyone to oppose them ;
I found myself feeble from my weakness.
- (27) When the attraction of [thy] kindness became [my] helper
I then found an entrance to that fort.
- (28) I saw a lane very narrow and dark—
Wind [even] could not enter into it.
- (29) Suddenly the attraction of thee, the Khizr of the way,
Became a shelter from all their obstructions.
- (30) The lane was leading to thine own apartment ;
That guide was the attraction of love.
- (31) Thy grace was every time the guide
When I was passing through that lane.
- (32) In that lane, like a zephyr,
Sometimes I found the scent of faithfulness.
- (33) But where is the way to the special apartment ?
It would be meet if thou shouldst show me the way to that apartment.
- (34) As I am from [the depth of] my heart the servant of thy court,
Grant an attraction, O Khizr of my way !
- (35) I am humbly standing in thy lane,
In order that I may see the footprint of Thine Excellency.
- (36) I have seen many a hermit of India,
But they are inferior to thy pupils.
- (37) Since I have observed the limit of respect
I have briefly stated my circumstances.

جواب شری ست گور صاحبہ بنام بال دھر از مقام واسکوره

- (۱) داپسند افضل حق یار تو باد .: در حریمِ خالص دل بار تو باد
- (۲) مهربان پدوستم اهل دل به تو .: کام دل بادا همه حاصل به تو
- (۳) گوش کردم جملہ شرح نامہات .: خوش بیان بادا زبانِ خامہات
- (۴) گر بصورت دوری از محرم منال .: لیک در معنی بما داری وصال
- (۵) نور من بنگر بہر جا جلوہ گر .: عام در حیوان و خاصہ در بشر
- (۶) نور پاکم در گرفت آفاق را .: لیک داند ہر کہ شد مشفقِ ما
- (۷) هیچ دوری نیست از ما تا بہ تو .: در میان گر هست منزلِ ہا بہ تو
- (۸) رُقبۂ مشفقِ ما بالا تر است .: ہر کہ شد مشفقِ ما نیک اختر است
- (۹) نور من تابندہ از ماہ و خور است .: نور من رخشدہ از ہر گوہر است
- (۱۰) در حقیقت گشتم از ما نامور .: اسم و جسم و رنگ و روی ہر بشر
- (۱۱) خود پرستی بابِ این بازار نیست .: خود فروشان را درین رہ بار نیست
- (۱۲) هستیِ خود بین بود بارِ گران .: خود پرستی ہست آزارِ گران
- (۱۳) در حریمِ نیست بارِ خود پرست .: وصلِ ما یابد کسے از خود پرست
- (۱۴) شیوہ مردان حق نبود خودی .: از خودی بگذر بما واصل شدی
- (۱۵) بے نشان آمد نشانِ بے خودان .: سر بنم بر آسمانِ بے خودان
- (۱۶) بے خودان ہستند والا دستگاہ .: شاہ وقت و صاحبِ تاج و کلاہ
- (۱۷) بے خودان خود مظهرِ خاص حق اند .: بے خودان خود متعزاتِ مطلق اند
- (۱۸) باش فرمان بخشِ شہرِ بیخودی .: آشنائی بر و بحرِ بیخودی
- (۱۹) بسکہ از تاثیرِ الفت ہاے ما .: در دلت اسرارِ عرفانِ کردہ جا
- (۲۰) واقعی خود از رموزِ فیضِ وصل .: از فرعِ پے میبری زان سوے اصل
- (۲۱) در حقیقت ہرچہ گفتم اے رفیق .: یاد دادن بود در شرطِ طریق
- (۲۲) از سدانندہ دعا گوے قدیم .: کرمست بر درگاہِ اخلاصتِ مفیم
- (۲۳) تا بود دایم مدارِ شش جہات .: تا بود قایم قوارِ کائنات
- (۲۴) صد دعا بادا بر احوالتِ شمول .: ز آنکہ میباشد دُعایِ او قبول
- (۲۵) باش از الطافِ ما اے جانِ جان .: کامرانِ این جہان و آن جہان

Translation of reply from Rūpa Bhawānī to Bāla Dhar.

- (1) O darling ! May God's grace be thy helper !
May thou have admittance into the sacred apartment of the heart !
- (2) May the saintly-minded be kindly disposed towards thee !
May thy desires be all fulfilled to thee !
- (3) I listened to all the contents of thy letter,
May the tongue of thy pen be eloquent !
- (4) Though in person thou art far away, do not grieve at separation from me :
But in reality thou art united with us.
- (5) See my splendour is conspicuous everywhere—
In beasts in general and in men in particular.

- (6) My holy light pervades the universe,
But every one observes it who has become fond of us.
- (7) There is no distance between us and thee,
Though there are many stages intervening between us.
- (8) The status of him who is fond of us is high ;
Whoever became fond of us is fortunate.
- (9) My effulgence is brighter than that of the moon and the sun ;
My effulgence is of greater lustre than any pearl.
- (10) In reality, from us has become renowned
The name, the person, the colour and the appearance of all mankind.
- (11) Self-praise is not the gate of this market ;
Those who indulge in self-praise have no access to this road.
- (12) The life of the conceited is a heavy burden ;
Selfishness is a great pain.
- (13) The selfish has no admittance into my apartment :
That person will be united with me who is selfless.
- (14) Ostentation is not the habit of the godly ;
Be far from self, and thou art united with us.
- (15) Selflessness is the sign of the selfless ;
Bow down at the door of the selfless.
- (16) The selfless are of the highest authority—
The kings of the time and the wearers of the crest and crown.
- (17) The selfless are the seers of God ;
The selfless are merged in the Almighty.
- (18) Be the ruler of the city of selflessness,
The possessor of lands and oceans of selflessness.
- (19) Very much from the effect of our love
The secrets of saints have dominated thy mind.
- (20) Thou thyself art aware of the secrets of the advantages of union
Therefore thou art inclined from the false towards the true.
- (21) Dear, whatever I have said, in reality
Was to remind [thee] of the way of religion.
- (22) From Sadānand, the old well-wisher,
Who is resolute at the door of thy friendship,
- (23) Until the centre of the six sides (of the universe) endures,
Until the stability of the world lasts,
- (24) A hundred prayers be connected with thee in thy vicissitudes,
As his prayers are granted (by God).
- (25) O soul of life ! be, by my affection,
Successful in this world and the world to come.

Rūpa Bhawānī's paternal female cousins often indulged in gibes, sneers and whispers against her for her ill-luck so far as conjugal happiness was concerned. Naturally the reproaches struck home, and she would heave a deep sigh and knit her brow in distress, her soul labouring under a sickly sensibility of the miseries not of herself alone for the time being, but also of others like herself in the family in the future, which she could foresee. On the other hand, her paternal male cousins' wives showed sincere sympathy with her and admired her magnanimity in patiently and nobly bearing misfortunes hatched by her cranky mother-in-law, and them she used to bless. And it does so happen that daughters-in-law in the Dhar family are, together with their husbands, invariably prosperous and happy.

Rūpa Bhawānī introduced a very important social reform, which is still in vogue, and has rendered her name immortal. She tabooed bigamy and polygamy, both in respect of daughters and daughters-in-law, in the Dhar family. This reform has greater force and higher sanction than a statutory law, solemnized as it is by an oath administered by her against its infringement, and it is, therefore, respected by all and strictly adhered to.

Rūpa Bhawānī's mind was always fixed on things heavenly. Her verses, composed in mixed Sanskrit and Kāshmirī, which number 96, have a profound mystic significance. They

have been recorded, and they are repeated by several of her votaries every morning. Five of them, which show that her spiritual *guru* in her practice of *yoga* was her father, Paṇḍit Mādho Dhar, are quoted below.

Tal pātāla tshāl phirit tah khorum ;
Metsi tah kan'v manzi unmas pay ;
Adah nād udum galī mad piwum.
Parovtum sumbrum sāt.
Āhushī ghī veglovum ;
Ang novum deshūgan.
Yusuy gur pitā suy chhum moluy ;
Suy prabhalum dīpa prakāsh ;
Suy sarva kulas udhār karawuny ;
Suy Ishwar suy chhum gur.

I dashed down into the nether regions [of the body] and brought it (the vital breath) up;
 I got its clue out of earth and stones;
 Then my [*kundalinī* or *śakti*] woke up with *nāda* (loud noise); I drank wine by the mouth.
 I got it (the vital breath) [and] gathered it within myself.
 I melted *ghī* for oblation;
 I purified all sides of my limbs.
 He, who is Father Guru, the same is my father;
 He became the brilliant lamp-light [in me];
 He is the liberator of the whole family;
 He is *Ishwar*, he is my *Guru*.

Rūpa Bhawānī, at the advanced age of 96 years, came to Śrīnagar after leaving Kastūr-māji in charge of her place at Vāsakur, and shuffled off her mortal coil without regret, but mourned by all, in her parents' house on the 7th of the dark fortnight of Māgh, v.s. 1777 (=A.H. 1133=A.D. 1721). The words *به رحمت پیوست* in the following epigram in Persian, composed by Shāh Sādiq Qalandar,⁶ give the chronogram, viz., A.H. 1133, of her death:—

عارفی ذات آن الک ارتار
 قالب عنصری خویش شکست
 کرد پرواز سوی عرش عظیم
 بادل نیک به رحمت پیوست

That holy-natured incarnation of the Unseen [Goddess]
 Broke her coil of four elements (i.e., quitted her body);
 Flew to the highest heaven;
 With a good-natured heart united with Bliss.

⁶ It is he who has written the following fine lines in Persian, which are suggestive of the transitoriness of the world:—

یک چند پئے زینت و زیور گشیدیم — در عهد شباب
 یک چند پئے دانش و دفتر گشیدیم — کردیم حساب
 چون واقف این جهان ابذر گشیدیم — نقشه مت بر آب
 دست از همه شستیم و قلندر گشیدیم — اینک دریاب
 یک چند سواره صید دشتی کردیم
 یک چند پیاده پشت بشتی کردیم
 دیدیم که این کوچه ندارد پایان
 گشتی کردیم و باز گشتی کردیم

At one time we were in pursuit of adornment and ornaments—during the season of youth;
 At another time we were in pursuit of knowledge and office—we made calculations;
 When we became aware of this wretched world—it is a picture drawn on the surface of water;
 We washed our hands of everything: we became monks—lo! find [God].
 At one time we made excursions over a plain, riding;
 At another time we walked round a plateau.
 We found this lane (i.e., life) had no end:
 We strolled on and strolled back.